IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel claims 2, 3, 4, 10, 11, 13 and 14 without prejudice.

Please amend/replace claims 1, 5-9 and 12 as follows:

Claim 1. (currently amended) A battery, comprising:

a battery housing defining a receiving area, said housing being configured to receive and engage a plurality of cells each having a cell housing;

a cell element being received and engaged within each of said cell housings, said cell element comprising a plurality of positive plates each having a positive tab portion depending outwardly from a periphery, wherein said positive tab portions are positioned adjacent to each other, a plurality of negative plates each having a negative tab portion depending outwardly from a periphery, wherein said negative tab portions are positioned adjacent to each other, and a nonconductive separator disposed in between said plurality of positive plates and said plurality of negative plates;

a positive plate being secured to each of said positive tab portions of said cell element, said positive plate including a positive post;

a negative plate being secured to each of said negative tab portions of said cell element, said negative plate including a negative post, wherein said cell housings are disposed in said battery housing such that each of said positive posts and said negative posts are positioned to protrude in the same direction; and

an inner cover being configured to be received within said battery housing and cover said positive and negative plates, said inner cover having a plurality of retaining walls each defining a plurality of receiving areas for receiving a portion of one of said positive posts passing through an opening in said inner cover and an adjacent negative post passing through another opening in said inner cover; and

a plurality of lead inserts being disposed in said plurality of receiving areas, said plurality of lead inserts being configured to allow a tip portion of said portion of one of said positive posts to pass through and a tip portion of said portion of one of said negative posts to pass through, wherein said tip portions are welded to said plurality of lead inserts after they are positioned in said plurality of receiving areas

~~being configured to allow a portion of said positive and said negative posts to pass therethough~~.

Claim 2. (cancelled)

Claim 3. (cancelled)

Claim 4. (cancelled)

Claim 5. (currently amended) The battery as in claim 1, wherein said opening and said another opening of said plurality of receiving areas includes an O-ring being configured to be received and engaged ~~in portion of~~ by said positive post and said negative post as they pass through said opening and said another opening ~~openings~~.

Claim 6. (currently amended) The battery as in claim ~~2~~1, wherein said plurality of lead inserts electrically connect adjacent cells ~~connects a positive post of a first cell element to a negative post of an adjacent cell element~~.

Claim 7. (currently amended) The battery as in claim ~~1~~ 6, wherein each of said plurality of cells are ~~cell elements is~~ connected in series ~~to an adjacent cell element~~.

Claim 8. (currently amended) The battery as in claim 7, wherein each cell housing has an outer configuration being configured to ~~the~~ be received within a complementary receiving area defined in said battery housing.

Claim 9. (currently amended) ~~An outer housing for a cell element of the battery,~~ A battery and battery cell assembly comprising a battery housing and a plurality of outer housings each comprising a battery cell, each outer housing being configured to be received within the battery housing, each outer housing comprising:

an internal receiving area defined by a pair of opposing walls, a pair of sidewalls disposed between said pair of opposing sidewalls and a bottom and a partially open end portion disposed opposite to said bottom, wherein a positive post of the battery cell is arranged on one side of said partially open end portion and a negative post of the battery cell is arranged on another side of said partially open end portion, said outer housing defining a lower end portion, an upper portion and a transitional portion, said transitional portion being disposed between said lower end

portion and said upper portion, said lower end portion and said transitional portion ~~outer housing~~ defining an outer configuration for being received and engaged in a complementary configuration of ~~a~~ the battery housing, wherein the plurality of outer housings are inserted into the battery housing in an alternating arrangement such that said positive post and said negative post of each battery cell are arranged such that each positive post is adjacent to a negative post of an adjacent battery cell.

Claim 10. (cancelled)

Claim 11. (cancelled)

Claim 12. (currently amended) A method for assembling a battery having a plurality of cells disposed in a battery housing, comprising:

inserting a plurality of cells into the battery housing each cell having a cell housing and a positive post and a negative post protruding from the same side of the cell, ~~into a~~ the battery housing having an internal configuration for receiving and engaging a complementary external configuration of said cell housings, wherein each cell is disposed in an alternating fashion such that each positive post of each cell is adjacent to a negative post of another cell;

positioning a cover over said plurality of cells wherein each positive post of each cell is received within a receiving area defined by a plurality of walls and said negative post of said another cell is also received with said receiving area; and

electrically connecting each of said plurality of cells in series by providing a ~~plurality of~~ lead inserts for each receiving area and welding said lead insert to each positive post of each cell and said negative post of said another cell ~~making contact with a positive post and a negative post of said plurality of cells~~.

Claim 13. (cancelled)

Claim 14. (cancelled)

Please add new claims 15-26 as follows:

Claim 15. (new) The method as in claim 12, further comprising:

securing a positive terminal of the battery to a positive post of one of said plurality of cells; and securing a negative terminal of the battery to a negative post of another one of said plurality of cells.

Claim 16. (new) The method as in claim 15, wherein said plurality of cells are arranged adjacent to each other from a first end to a second end, wherein said positive terminal is positioned at said first end and said negative terminal is positioned at said second end.

Claim 17. (new) A battery, comprising:

a battery housing defining a receiving area, said housing being configured to receive and engage a plurality of cells each having a cell housing, each cell comprising a plurality of positive plates secured to a positive post, a plurality of negative plates secured to a negative post and a nonconductive separator disposed between each positive plate and each negative plate, said positive post and said negative post protruding from the same side of said cell housing, wherein said cell housings are disposed in the battery housing in an alternating fashion wherein each positive post of each cell is adjacent to a negative post of another cell when said plurality of cells are disposed within said receiving area;

an internal cover disposed over said plurality of cells, said internal cover being disposed within said receiving area after said plurality of cells are disposed therein, said internal cover having a plurality of predefined receiving areas on an upper surface for receiving a positive post of one of said plurality of cells and a negative post of an adjacent cell; and

a plurality of lead inserts configured to be inserted within said plurality of receiving areas, said plurality of lead inserts electrically connecting one of said plurality of cells to another one of said plurality of cells.

Claim 18. (new) The battery as in claim 17, further comprising an O-ring disposed between a lower surface of said internal cover and said positive post and said negative post of said plurality of cells.

Claim 19. (new) The battery as in claim 17, wherein a lower surface of said internal cover is configured to engage said cell housings.

Claim 20. (new) The battery as in claim 17, wherein a lower surface of said internal cover is configured to engage said battery housing.

Claim 21. (new) The battery as in claim 17, wherein said internal cover completely covers each cell housing.

Claim 22. (new) The battery as in claim 17, wherein a positive terminal of the battery is secured to a positive post of one of said plurality of cells and a negative terminal of the battery is secured to a negative post of another one of said plurality of cells.

Claim 23. (new) The battery as in claim 22, wherein said plurality of cells are arranged adjacent to each other from a first end to a second end, wherein said positive terminal is positioned at said first end and said negative terminal is positioned at said second end.

Claim 24. (new) The battery as in claim 17, wherein said cell housings each have a pair of angled portions configured for engaging a complimentary feature of said receiving area of said battery housing.

Claim 25. (new) The assembly as in claim 9, wherein said lower end portion has a first width and said upper portion has a second width said second width being greater than said first width and said transitional portion is an angular configuration of said outer housing, said angular configuration being configured to engage a complimentary feature of the battery housing.

Claim 26. (new) The method as in claim 12, further comprising:

positioning an outer cover over said plurality of inserts after the step of welding.